

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 remain pending in this application.

Claim 11 has been withdrawn pending allowance of a generic claim.

Claims 1, 20, 22 and 29 are in independent form.

Claim Objections

The informalities in Claims 1, 7 and 17 have been corrected as suggested by the Examiner.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 18 and 23 have been amended to recite the inclusion of a structural component of the coating portions having an immunosuppressant agent.

Support for the amendment may be found in U.S. Patent No. 6,248,130, C.II, 1.36-44, incorporated by reference in the Specification on page 3, lines 4, 5.

Claim 2 has been amended to recite the coating portions mentioned in Claim 1.

Consequently, the 112 rejections are believed to be overcome.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1, 20, 22 and 29 have been amended to more definitely recite the separate and distinct characters of the two external coating portions.

In Claim 1, the anterior and posterior location of these portions are also recited.

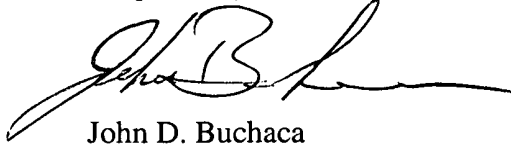
Support for the amendment may be found in the Abstract lines 1-3; in the Specification at page 5, lines 8-12; page 7, lines 7-24; and in the drawing.

The cited prior art does not teach the use of two types of separate external coating portions having different absorbability rates.

In view of which, the rejection for lack of novelty is no longer applicable.

An early allowance of all the pending claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

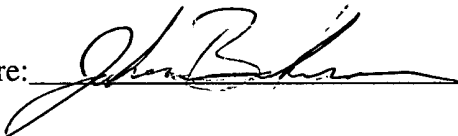


John D. Buchaca
Registration No. 37,289

1545 Hotel Circle South, Suite 150
San Diego, California 92108-3426
Telephone: (619) 294-2922
Fax No. (619) 294-8674

040020

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on September 18, 2006, by John D. Buchaca, Reg. No. 37,289.

Signature:  Date: September 18, 2006